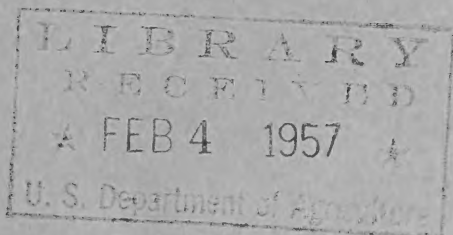


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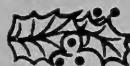


**Growing Our
AMERICAN HOLLY**

(*Ilex opaca*)

IN THE NORTH

Wilfred Wheeler
Ashumet Farm
Falmouth, Mass.



Much has been said and written as to why you cannot grow Hollies here in the north. But if you will forget most of this and remember that there are only a few rules to successful Holly culture, then you may enjoy the growing of this beautiful and much neglected evergreen.

The first thing to remember is that there must be two Hollies for successful berry bearing, a male and a female plant — the female being the berry bearing tree — the male will pollenize many females within a limited distance.

Then remember that Hollies must have the proper soil and this must be acid, such as blueberries, azaleas and rhododendrons are grown in. The soil must be light but fertile. You can make it so by adding sand to heavy soil. Peat can be added to make a light soil hold moisture, also some very old manure or dried commercial manure can be used to make up the necessary fertility. Good drainage is very important.

The Holly will stand some shade but will do better in full sunlight. It will stand a lot of wind, but will grow faster and produce berries earlier with some protection from sweeping winds. Holly grows best away from the roots of large trees whose roots sap the soil of moisture and nourishment. The Holly does well in good garden soil of the right acidity, where no lime has been added.

The Holly is a very long lived tree and therefore it is necessary to give it a good start in life. Dig a big hole, even for a small plant, never less than 3 feet across and at least 2 feet deep. If the soil is poor, throw it all away and use in the hole plenty

of oak leaves or oak leaf mould mixed with top soil from sour land, or a good grade of peat mixed with good loam which is sour. Do not plant too deep — keep the Holly about in the same relation to the top of the ground as it originally grew. When the soil is all filled in, water thoroughly. DO NOT TRAMP the soil in, let settle and fill to the desired level.

The best time to plant a Holly is in the early spring unless you can get pot grown plants. These can be planted at any time provided the trees can be watered. The young or newly planted holly must have plenty of water in dry summer weather as well as in the fall before the ground freezes.

Remember also the Holly must be mulched, to keep the ground cool and moist. Mulches range from oak leaves to saw dust, decayed wood, and peat — the latter is especially good to protect the young hollies from deep freezing its first few winters.

Also remember that commercial fertilizers or bone meal should not be used when planting a Holly and only sparingly until the tree is well established. But animal manures, especially poultry manure, can be used as mulches.

Holly may be pruned to a single stem or left to grow as a large bush. As it comes into bearing some of the longer branches may be pruned slightly at first, and always carefully, to be used for Christmas decorations.

Recently many selections of the best of our northern Hollies have been made and it is far better to start with these rather than with the seedling hollies which have

no particular value. The selections have much to recommend them, such as early bearing, large and well colored berries, fine dark foliage and well shaped trees.

Among some of the best of these that have been introduced from Ashumet Farm are the following: St. Mary, Emily, Amy, St. Ann, Freeman, Natale, Perpetual and Elizabeth. This group combines the best in our northern Hollies. They are very hardy, and among them are quick growers like St. Ann, large and abundant berries like Emily, landscape trees like Freeman and Elizabeth. Trees that are best for Christmas decoration like Natale, and one of the group keeps its red berries the year around Perpetual. St. Mary is a fine pot plant and produces berries when very young and keeps a true holly shape.

Prices of the above hollies in 3" pots are \$2.00 each, and by the dozen \$20.00, 5" pots are \$4.00 each and \$40.00 a dozen. Larger plants, field grown, are from \$7.50 and in still larger sizes prices are determined by the plant itself. Specimen trees vary from \$50.00 up. Male trees — 3" pots are \$1.50 each.

We invite you to visit the farm and see for yourself the hollies we have here. The best color in the berries begins early in November and lasts through the winter.

The Holly is a tree of constant beauty throughout the year.

WILFRID WHEELER

Ashumet Farm
Falmouth
Massachusetts